

Waukegan Landmarks

July 2015

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A building that has architectural or historic significance may be designated as a Waukegan landmark, a classification created under the Waukegan Historic Preservation Ordinance, passed in December of 2001. Owners of historic landmark structures may obtain professional advice and tax incentives, which enable them to protect the historic integrity of their buildings, while fostering continued, contemporary usage.

The Historic Preservation Commission is a volunteer advisory body that is charged with preserving the City's historic buildings and areas by "landmarking" them, which protects them from demolition and ensures that any alterations are sensitive to their historical character. The Historic Preservation Commission is a "recommending body;" where final landmarking decisions are made by the City Council.

The Commission is made up of seven Waukegan residents appointed by the Mayor. Many of those members have expertise in building, design and preservation matters.

Designation recognizes that the property is significant to Waukegan and that its historic character and architectural merit should be maintained and preserved for current and future generations.

Once property is designated as a landmark, the owner must follow the City's architectural review guidelines when making changes to the exterior of the landmark. The Commission strongly encourages the types of changes that will keep a building functional, while re-

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The Charles T. Dickinson Residence

Built 1866, Landmarked October 17, 2005

The Charles T. Dickinson Residence at 701 Grand Avenue is an extraordinary example of the Second Empire style of architecture. Based on the architecture of the Second Empire era in France, the most prominent feature of the style is the steeply-sloped mansard roof. Houses built in this style were typically three stories in height; this example is somewhat unusual in that it only rises two stories.

The house was built about 1866 for Charles T. Dickinson, an architect/builder working in the Waukegan area. This may account for the unusually elaborate trim and ornament. Not only would Dickinson have paid special attention to his own personal residence, the building would have served as an example of his skill as a designer and builder, showing potential clients the level of artistry he was capable of achieving.



Notable features of the façade include the tall, elaborately-framed windows, the intricate dormers and the broad cornice with paired brackets and dentil trim. The most significant feature of the house however, is the amazingly-detailed entryway. A pair of monumental wooden brackets, in the shape of the letter K, flank the doorway and contain numerous carved details. The tall, arched double doors are massive and heavy and decorated with further carved motifs. The house retains an incredibly high degree of architectural integrity.

The house is a significant survivor of the period when elegant and gracious homes such as these lined Grand Avenue. In spite of early additions to the back end of the structure, the home has survived largely intact, including original wood siding and trim. As such, it is a rare and important example of the building period which followed the Civil War in Waukegan.

Introduction

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taining its important physical character. Therefore, any significant exterior alterations to a landmarked building will require a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) from the Historic Preservation Commission. The certificate ensures that alterations are compatible with the historic and architectural character that qualified the structure as a landmark.

The Judge Francis E. Clarke Residence

Built 1875, Landmarked October 17, 2005

The Judge Francis E. Clarke Residence at 408 N. Sheridan Road is an excellent example of the transition from the Italianate to the Queen Anne style that was typical of the 1870s. Although it displays many of the classic features of the Italianate style, there are features that definitely foreshadow the coming popularity of the more unrestricted Queen Anne. Porter Brothers, the builder of the home, built many homes in Waukegan during this period, and their trademark details are in evidence here.



Construction on the house began in May 1875 and concluded in March 1876. The work is particularly well-documented in the diaries of David Simpson, a carpenter employed by Porter Brothers. It would have been one of the largest homes in Waukegan at the time of its completion. This, together with its prominent siting on Sheridan Road, spoke to the prominence of its owner, Judge Francis E. Clarke. Significant features displaying the Italianate style include the pair of symmetrical bays with tall narrow windows, the elaborate bracketed cornice and the intricately detailed porch. The Queen Anne is best

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The Judge Francis E. Clarke Residence

Built 1875, Landmarked October 17, 2005

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represented in the unusually shaped central dormer with finely proportioned “gingerbread” trim.

Clarke was born in Vermont in 1828 and following graduation from Dartmouth College in 1851, moved to Waukegan where he was employed as a teacher and then principal of the Waukegan Academy. The following year he was elected Lake County Superintendent of Schools. He was admitted to the Lake County bar in 1855 and formed a law partnership with James S. Frazer under the name of Frazer & Clarke. He was one of the incorporators of the First National Bank of Waukegan, and served as a director and vice-president. In 1879, he was elected County Judge in Lake County.



Dormer with gingerbread trim

Clarke died in 1899, and his widow in 1903. Their children continued to occupy the house until 1921 when it was sold to Wetzel & Peterson, funeral directors. That firm had its origins in Marr, Reid & Company which had been founded in 1865 on Genesee Street. The current business, Peterson & Patch Funeral Home, is a direct descendant of that original firm.

The John McKey Residence

Built 1850, Landmarked January 17, 2006

The John McKey Residence at 410 Hickory Street was built about 1850, predating the incorporation of Waukegan as a city by nearly a decade. The original house, probably a good deal smaller than the structure we see today, was built in the vernacular style, sometimes also referred to as “farmhouse” style. The simple lines and balloon-frame construction incorporated in this style made it possible for homeowners to construct their own homes without the

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The John McKey Residence

Built 1850, Landmarked January 17, 2006

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services of an architect or experienced contractor. As Waukegan grew, so did these houses, both with the addition of modern amenities including bathrooms and kitchens, as well as upgrading the style of the house on the exterior. The paneled bay windows marking the location of the two parlors, and the gracious wrap-around porch with Ionic columns are typical of the late 19th-century modifications made to these early homes. The original coach house, located immediately north of the residence, is a very rare survivor of late 19th-century outbuildings and still retains its original hayloft and carriage doors.

The house was built for John McKey, a miller born in Vermont in 1811. By 1890, it had been acquired by William and Alice (Paddock) Smith, early Lake County settlers. Their two children both became prominent Waukegan citizens. Daughter Genevieve married Cyrus Blodgett, son of a two-term mayor of Waukegan, and she remained in the house until her death in 1954 at the age of 75. Son Ashbel V. Smith became a prominent lawyer, attained the rank of Colonel during World War I, and served as Illinois State's Attorney from



Coach house

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The John McKey Residence

Built 1850, Landmarked January 17, 2006

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1920 to 1932. At the time of his death in 1936, it was said that “Ashbel V. Smith rose to a place of great prominence and even greater eminence in Waukegan, Lake County, and Illinois. He was a great soldier and a gracious citizen of Waukegan.”

After passing through several additional owners, it was acquired by the current owners, Dr. Thomas Barrett and Dr. Janine Goldstein in 1990. They have carefully maintained and restored the house during their ownership, preserving this early example of vernacular architecture in both the residence and coach house.

The Peter Paulson/Jack Benny Residence

Built 1895, Landmarked April 17, 2006

The two-and-one-half story frame house at 518 Clayton Street was built about 1895 for Peter Paulson, a Danish immigrant employed as a railroad conductor. At the time of construction, a second "mirror-image" house was built next door at 520 Clayton Street, differing only in the treatment of the



attic level. Paulson, his wife Jennie and their children occupied the house until 1909 when it was rented to the Kubelsky family for two years. (Benjamin Kubelsky later changed his name to Jack Benny).

The house is a typical late 19th-century middle-class dwelling in the home-stead style with a front-facing gable. The original wrap-around porch with

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The Peter Paulson/Jack Benny Residence

Built 1895, Landmarked April 17, 2006

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intricate fret sawn trim remains in place as does the simple ball-and-stick fretwork beneath the jerkin-head gable. Asbestos shingles have sheathed the house since at least the 1940s, and new windows and front door have recently been installed. In spite of these modifications however, the overall massing and details of the houses are unchanged since the occupancy by the Kubelsky family, and the house would easily be recognized by Jack Benny were he to visit Waukegan today. The Kubelsky family rented a number of different apartments and houses in Waukegan during the years that Jack Benny was growing up. This house is the last of these sites which still stands.

Jack Benny was one of the first major radio personalities to make the successful transition to television. A huge star on radio ever since his 1932 debut on the Ed Sullivan show, Jack Benny's own television show premiered on CBS on October 28, 1950. This immensely popular show remained on the air for 15 years. Always loyal to his hometown of Waukegan, he frequently mentioned the city in his broadcasts, putting Waukegan on the map and forever linking himself with the city in which he was raised.

Jack Benny was born Benjamin Kubelsky on February 14, 1894 to Mayer and Emma Kubelsky. A younger sister Florence followed seven years later. The family resided in many different apartments and rented houses during Benny's childhood. His father was the proprietor of the Lake County Wine & Liquor Company, and later was a partner in a furniture and clothing business called Kubelsky & Gordon.

In 1909, the family rented the house at 518 Clayton Street, and they remained here through 1910. This was an important time in young Benny's life. He had learned to play the violin at an early age, and in 1910, while living in the house, received his first break, obtaining a job playing the violin in the pit of the Barrison Theatre, which was located at 25 S. Genesee. He eventually developed a vaudeville act of his own known as Salisbury and Benny, developing his trademark penny-pinching persona and impeccable sense of timing. He married Sadie Marks in a friend's apartment at the Clayton Hotel (southwest corner of Sheridan and Clayton) on January 14, 1927.

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The Peter Paulson/Jack Benny Residence

Built 1895, Landmarked April 17, 2006

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Even after achieving stardom, Benny never forgot his roots, and frequently returned to Waukegan, where his parents and sister are buried. His visits, known as "Jack Benny Days," brought out brass bands and huge crowds of fans. The largest of these events was the world premiere of his movie "Man About Town" at the Genesee Theatre on June 25, 1939. His final visit occurred in 1974 when he gave a benefit performance with the newly formed Waukegan Symphony Orchestra. He died in December of that year at the age of 80.

Several sites in Waukegan have been named in honor of Jack Benny including the Jack Benny School, the Jack Benny Center in Bowen Park and Benny Avenue, in addition to the installation of Jack Benny Plaza and Statue and his recognition in the Walk of Stars Park. This house however, is the last surviving building with a link to his years in Waukegan and therefore deserves landmark designation in honor of Benny's many accomplishments in the entertainment industry and his lifelong commitment to his hometown.

The Joseph P. Arthur Residence

Built 1913, Landmarked May 15, 2006

The Joseph P. Arthur Residence, located at 445 N. Genesee Street, is a rare example of the Prairie style of architecture in Waukegan. The use of stucco, the emphasis on the horizontal line, heavy overhanging eaves, corner piers, broad chimney and shallow pitched roofs are all elements of the style presented in this design. In addition, the residence contains many excellent examples of Prairie style casement and leaded-glass windows. The plan of the residence is cruciform, addressing its corner lot location and providing for prominent elevations facing both Genesee Street and Cory Avenue. The property also includes the original garage executed in the Prairie style with a slab roof and stucco cladding.

The residence was built for Joseph P. Arthur, who with his brother Charles, co-founded the Cyclone Fence Company, a highly successful business which operated for many years along the lakefront. It became the world's largest

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The Joseph P. Arthur Residence

Built 1913, Landmarked May 15, 2006

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manufacturer of ornamental fencing and gates and by the 1910's employed over 125 men. Joseph P. Arthur served as President and General Manager. In 1917, Arthur sold the residence to the Honorable Claire C. Edwards, a judge of the 17th Judicial District. In 1936, the house was purchased by the



YWCA, which made various alterations to accommodate its new function, while preserving the basic architecture of the structure. It was acquired by Shimer College in the late 1980's and was known as Prairie House, which contained offices and spaces for student and faculty functions.

Thomas Eddy Tallmadge (1876-1940) and Vernon Spencer Watson (1878-1950) were prominent and prolific architects in the Chicago area during the first decades of the 20th century. The architects met while working in the office of D.H. Burnham and Company (which had been responsible for the planning of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893). In October 1905,

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The Joseph P. Arthur Residence

Built 1913, Landmarked May 15, 2006

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the two left the Burnham company and opened their own firm, which operated for thirty-one years and produced over 250 buildings. They designed many Prairie-style residences in the Chicago area, including a significant number in Evanston and Oak Park, with Watson being the primary designer in this style. In the 1920's and 1930's, as the Prairie style fell from favor, they turned to ecclesiastical architecture, and designed a significant number of churches in the Gothic style. One of their last large-scale commissions was the design of the Colonial Village at the 1933 Century of Progress Exposition. The partnership was dissolved when Watson retired in 1936 and Tallmadge opened his own practice.

The Joseph P. Arthur Residence is an excellent example of the Prairie style of architecture which developed at the turn of the century, with Frank Lloyd Wright being its leading proponent. The architectural firm of Tallmadge & Watson was one of a small number of firms known for their ability to produce beautiful and distinctive residences in the style at a reasonable cost for their clients. As one of the very few examples of the Prairie style standing in Waukegan, it is worthy of landmark status to ensure its careful preservation in the years to come. It is now privately-owned as a residence.



Restored open porch

The John H. Swartout Residence

Built circa 1847, Landmarked May 15, 2006

The Swartout Residence, 414 N. Sheridan Road, is the quintessential Greek Revival frame structure, featuring a temple front consisting of a series of four Doric columns supporting a classical pediment. The façade is further enhanced with tall "six-over-six" windows, pilasters with Greek bandwork, and a classic entryway with transom above. It was built for John H. Swartout, a 30-year old car-



riage maker who emigrated from New York to Little Fort (Waukegan). He was one of the charter members of the Baptist Church when it formed in 1846, and served as trustee of the Village of Little Fort (Waukegan) in 1850.

In 1857 it was sold to Mary Ann Peterson, who added a large rear addition the following year, more than doubling the size of the house. In 1864, it was sold to Mrs. Sylvia Newcomb who added the fashionable Italianate style bay window to the north side of the house in 1877. Following her death in 1891, it was left to her niece, Mrs. W.G. Hardie, and she and her husband remained there for several decades.

In 1934, the house was extensively documented by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), a project of the U.S. Department of the Interior. Detailed drawings of the exterior, floor plans and decorative details were executed by trained architects, in addition to photographs and written documentation. The HABS Advisory Committee stated that the house "possesses exceptional architectural interest and as being worthy of most careful preservation for the benefit of future generations." These records remain a part of the HABS collection on file at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. The residence took on additional prominence when it was featured in the 1949 book, *Old Illinois Houses* by John Drury, who referred to the building as a "miniature Parthenon" and praised it as "a distinctive example of the Greek Revival style of architecture in America."

In 1981, the house was purchased by the Waukegan/Lake County Chamber of Commerce, and was subsequently acquired by Shimer College in 1993. It now is under private ownership.

The John M. Strong Residence

Built circa 1846, Landmarked May 15, 2006

The John M. Strong residence, 420 N. Sheridan Road, underwent several changes during the 19th century but began its life around 1846 as a simple and modest 1½ story Greek Revival residence. The original residence is still evident in the second story gable in its classic Greek Revival proportions, with simple dentil trim beneath the eaves. In the 1860's or early 1870's, the residence was significantly enlarged and remodeled in the then popular Italianate style. It features large floor-to-ceiling windows with finely-detailed surrounds, and brackets beneath the roof line. It is highly probable that there were a series of additions over time, resulting in a house that includes four porches and eleven exterior doors.

The earliest family connected with the residence is that of John M. Strong, a prominent businessman involved in various commercial concerns. He also served as President of the Bureau of Transportation in the 1890's. His son William, became an attorney and lived in the residence until after the turn of the



century. This set a trend, as the next two owners were also attorneys. Clarence E. Smith bought the residence about 1910 and sold in the mid-1920's to Okel and Lavinia Fuqua, who lived there for nearly fifty years. The Fuquas were both lawyers, and for a time were the only husband and wife team in the State of Illinois.

After the residence was acquired by Shimer College, the house received a particularly fine and historically accurate paint scheme on the exterior, which serves to highlight and enhance the elaborate detailing of the building. The residence is now privately-owned.

The Henry F. Porter Residence

Built 1845, Landmarked May 15, 2006

The Henry F. Porter Residence, 426 N. Sheridan Road, still retains its elegant and simple Greek Revival lines. The classic pediment over the second-story windows, the varied window sizes and groupings and the shallow pitched roof are all classic elements of the style. The only major changes to the residence occurred after 1950 when the residence was clad in aluminum siding and the one-story open porch was enclosed. These changes could easily be reversed.

The residence was built for Henry F. Porter, a pioneer settler born in Vermont in 1823. While engaged as a cabin boy on the schooner *Bolivar*, he first visited Waukegan in 1833. He returned ten years later and took up permanent residence in June 1843. He continued sailing until 1850 as a captain, and then became a prominent grocery merchant in town, retiring in 1895. Henry Porter and his wife were the parents of three children raised in the house, including a daughter Hattie, later Hattie Barwell, for whom the Barwell Club was named. The Club, located at 583 S. Sheridan Road, was part

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After restoration

The Henry F. Porter Residence

Built 1845, Landmarked May 15, 2006

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of the Barwell Settlement that provided free health care and other services to Waukegan residents in the days before the Lake County Health Department. The Porters remained in the house until after the turn of the century. The residence is now occupied by Chevalier Lewis Tax Services, PC.



Prior to restoration

The Welcome Jilson Residence

Built 1845, Landmarked May 15, 2006

The Welcome Jilson Residence, 430 N. Sheridan Road, is a classic example of the Greek Revival style consisting of the main two-story section surmounted by the traditional Greek pediment, and a one-story wing to the north. An overhang above the main entrance is supported by a pair of elaborately carved brackets, the style of which suggests that this alteration was made during the 1860's. Later changes to the house made after 1950 included the cladding of the house in siding, adding an attached garage to the north end, and removing the porch in front of the one-story wing. These changes were later reversed in 2008 by the current owner.

The residence was built for Welcome Jilson, another of Waukegan's earliest

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The Welcome Jilson Residence

Built 1845, Landmarked May 15, 2006

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settlers. Jilson was born in Oneida County, NY in 1811 and moved west to Kenosha with his wife Cordelia in 1843. In May 1844, they located to Waukegan where they took up permanent residence. Jilson originally worked as a school teacher and taught at the first school in Antioch in 1843, a small room over a store. In later years, he worked primarily as a painter. He died in December 1889.

Cordelia Jilson was an important founding member of the local Baptist Church. In the history of the church, it states that Rev. Peter Freeman was sent to Little Fort to establish a church and "the first task of the pioneer preacher was to seek out a Mrs. Cordelia Jilson who had recently moved here from Mount Morris,



After restoration

New York, and was known as a Baptist. Mrs. Jilson was found and enlisted as a charter member of the Church, where she remained a faithful member for more than fifty years." She remained in the house until her death about 1904.

Through the approval of three Certificates of Appropriateness by the Historic Preservation Commission, the current owner has been able to restore the residence from its previous state as a converted three-flat residence to its current state as a single-family residence pictured above. The first phase of the restoration included the removal of the attached garage on the northeast side of the residence and a shed roof addition on the southwest side of the residence. Neither of which were original to the building. The first phase also included the removal of all exterior asphalt sheathing covering the origi-

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The Welcome Jilson Residence

Built 1845, Landmarked May 15, 2006

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nal clapboard and repair and replace original clapboard with identical materials. All of the vinyl replacement windows were removed and replaced with appropriate six-over-six divided light windows. The original decorative porch to the north of the front door was restored with the addition of appropriate windows on the east wall, columns for the porch and decking. A newly-discovered covered porch on the



Prior to restoration

rear of the house was also restored with Greek revival Doric columns. The exterior was then finished with historically accurate colors appropriate for Greek revival architecture. The door and Italianate embellishments were painted a dark forest green.

The Robert A. Conolly Residence

Built 1845, Landmarked May 15, 2006

The Robert A. Conolly residence, 438 N. Sheridan Road, began its life as a two-story brick Greek Revival home in the mid-1840's. In 1871, that house was incorporated into a new and much larger residence for Robert A. Conolly, designed in the then fashionable Italianate style, modeled after Italian villas. The house features a prominent three-story central tower, at the base of which is found the main entryway with a pair of original paneled doors and stained-glass transom surrounded by wood rope trim. Robert A. Conolly owned an 82-acre wooded lot, which now forms part of the Shore-acres Country Club in Lake Bluff. The front doors of the house were made from trees taken from this lot. The tower features large arched openings at each level with a pair of arched windows set within. To the north of the tow-

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The Robert A. Conolly Residence

Built 1845, Landmarked May 15, 2006

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er is the original section of the house, two stories in height which was improved with pairs of elaborately-carved brackets under the eaves. To the south of the tower is a two-story section with a one-story porch featuring elegant



Corinthian columns and a bracketed cornice, which is also repeated in the adjacent one-story bay window facing south. Tall double-hung windows across the façade, with glass imported from Europe are topped with decorative bracketed pediments. The house is built of double brick walls with an air space in between.

Robert A. Conolly was born in County Donegal, Ireland in 1830 and immigrated to the United States with his parents in 1834. In 1852, he came west "seeking his fortune" and ended in Chicago, where he secured a position as a civil engineer with what was then known as the Chicago & Northwestern Railway. He was employed on the survey of the road from Chicago to Milwaukee passing through Waukegan. He was also a contractor on the construction of the road, and supposedly was criticized for building the finest of the railroad stations in his new hometown of Waukegan. Other projects in which he was involved were the construction of the first water intake cribs at Chicago, the extensive iron-ore docks at Escanaba, Michigan and the plan for the City of Holland, Michigan.

In 1861, Robert A. Conolly was married to Harriet Ballentine, daughter of David Ballentine, early mayor of Waukegan. They had four children, including Robert B. Conolly, who later served as city clerk, police chief and state

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The Robert A. Conolly Residence

Built 1845, Landmarked May 15, 2006

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deputy fire marshal. Grandson Richard Lansing Conolly, born in 1892, had a distinguished career in the Navy, achieving the rank of Admiral. In 1978, a destroyer was named in his honor. Another grandson of Robert and Harriet Conolly was John Hamilton Conolly, who served several terms as a state representative, living in the old Ballentine house which stands at 837 N. Sheridan Road.

The Dr. Moses Evans Residence

Built 1857, Landmarked June 19, 2006

The Dr. Moses Evans Residence at 606 N. Sheridan Road was built in 1857 for Dr. Moses Evans, who owned a medical practice with Dr. David Cory, one of Waukegan's most prominent early residents.



The two-story brick house is built in the Italianate style with tall arched windows, an open porch across the facade and a simple unadorned cornice. The property was originally five times larger than it is today and extended west to Genesee Street. In 1862, Evans was mustered into the Union Army as a surgeon with the Illinois 96th and traveled extensively with General Grant, being present at the battles of Chikamaunga and Chattanooga, where he was wounded. He returned to his home in 1865 at the conclusion of the war, and

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The Dr. Moses Evans Residence

Built 1857, Landmarked June 19, 2006

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soon after sold the property for \$7,800 to raise needed funds to restart his medical practice, located at the corner of Genesee and Washington. He later served as Waukegan postmaster.

The house has had six owners since Dr. Evans sold the property, including a prominent dentist (Dr. Shugart), the owner of a roofing company (Ford), and the owners of a vacuum company (Morrow). The rear addition was added in the 1970's and includes a servant's wing on the second floor. While owned by the Morrow family, it was converted to a two-flat. During World War II, it served as a nursery, where mothers could drop off their children for day care, allowing them to join the work force as part of the war effort.

At the close of the war, it was bought by an accountant, Leonard Murray, who owned several rental properties. He converted it into an apartment building, with each room being rented separately. When the current owner, Randy Bowcott, acquired the property in 1981, it was being used as a four-unit apartment building. He gradually deconverted the property back into a single-family home. The exterior and interior have been extensively and accurately restored to their original 1870 appearance.

The South Side Fire Station

Built 1911, Landmarked September 18, 2006

The history of the Waukegan Fire Department dates back to the year 1847 when a Bucket Company and a Hook and Ladder Company were organized. In 1852, a hand engine, hose reel and other equipment were purchased and the Department was organized into three divisions - Fire Company, Hose Company and Hook and Ladder Company. By the early 1900's, the growth of Waukegan brought about the need for the construction of a second fire house on the south side of the city.

This firehouse, located at 424 South Avenue, was completed in 1911. The general massing of the structure is reminiscent of the Italian Villa style of architecture, with a tall imposing four-story tower dominating the design.

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The South Side Fire Station

Built 1911, Landmarked September 18, 2006

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The tower was decorative as well as functional, as the fire hoses were hung inside at full length to dry. The detailing of the building is more consistent with the Craftsman style which had gained popularity by this time. A darker brown brick covers the first story, with a lighter red brick found on the second story and tower. A particularly fine feature of the design is the brick corbelling found on the upper story of the tower which creates a series of geometric patterns on the wall surfaces around the window openings. The broad overhanging eaves on the building are supported by simple but substantial wood brackets. Window openings feature multi-paned sashes in 8-over-2 and other combinations. A pair of wooden doors dominate the façade.



In November 1976 the fire station was recognized by the Waukegan Bicentennial Commission as one of 27 architecturally-significant buildings in the City to be designated as Bicentennial Landmarks. In 1983, the station was closed after 72 years of service, when the new central station at Jackson Street and Belvidere Road opened. For the next ten years, the building sat vacant awaiting a new life. By 1993, the City had invested approximately \$80,000 into refurbishing the building to house the offices of the Building, Zoning and Code Enforcement Departments. When it was determined that this plan would not work, the City deeded the property to Waukegan Township for the creation of Lake County's first designated homeless shelter.

Milton Staben, long time Township Supervisor had died in April 1993 and for years had a dream of establishing a shelter for homeless single men, following the closure of the downtown YMCA. New Township Supervisor Patricia Jones spearheaded the effort to convert the fire station into the Staben Center in his honor. On October 29, 1993, the Center was officially

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The South Side Fire Station

Built 1911, Landmarked September 18, 2006

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dedicated to Staben, and his son Peter, an attorney who had died three months before his father.

The shelter has a capacity of fifteen, who are in residency up to six months with six additional months of counseling and case management afterwards. Educational and vocational training services are provided along with sessions for those with substance and alcohol abuse issues. The Home Sweet Home program was established whereby residents assist the elderly with snow removal and lawn care. In 1994, the Center was the first place winner in the Governor's Home Town Award for the valuable services it provides. The Center estimates that well over 4,000 men have been helped during its nineteen years in operation.

The fire station, a local "landmark" in the general sense since its construction, is an excellent example of the possibilities of adaptive reuse, when a structure ceases to function in its original capacity and finds a new and effective use to ensure its survival into the future.

The Carnegie Library

Built 1903, Landmarked June 18, 2007

On February 27, 1901, Mr. A.K. Stearns, publisher of the Waukegan Daily and Weekly Sun and a member of the Waukegan Library Association's board of Directors wrote to Andrew Carnegie requesting \$25,000 "to build us a stone building which would be both a monument to your own benevolence and a guiding post in the lives of the sons and daughters of our great industries" - a library.

Nine days later, March 8, 1901, Mr. Carnegie's secretary James Betram replied that if the City would furnish a suitable site and support the library with tax money equal to ten percent of the gift, Mr. Carnegie would give \$25,000 for the building. The City Council passed an ordinance on March 18, 1901 for the annual tax to maintain the library and secured the site on Sheridan Road by having an heir to Oliver S. Lincoln amend Lincoln's deed

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The Carnegie Library

Built 1903, Landmarked June 18, 2007

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to allow the property to be used as a library. In 1903, the city requested and received an additional \$2,500 from Carnegie to sink the library's foundation 30 feet.

Andrew Carnegie gave more than \$56 million between 1881 and 1917 to build 2,509 library buildings throughout the world and Waukegan's Carnegie Library, located at 1 N. Sheridan Road, is one of 105 built in Illinois with Carnegie funds and is rather unusual because of its location on the bluff. It was one of the first Carnegie libraries designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Patton & Miller. Normand S. Patton designed the Chicago Academy of Sciences building and his firm went on to design at least fourteen other Illinois Carnegie libraries as well as numerous other libraries throughout the Midwest.



The Carnegie Library building was continuously used as the public library for the City of Waukegan until 1965 when the library relocated to a new, larger building at its current location on County Street. On December 31, 2013, the Carnegie Library was approved by the Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council (IHSAC) and National Park Services and placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

First National Bank of Waukegan

Built 1925, Landmarked June 18, 2007

1 S. Genesee is a highly significant building in the history of Waukegan, largely because it was the home of the oldest bank institution in Lake County, Illinois, as well as being a highly-recognized landmark in the community and a handsome example of a Classical Revival bank building.

Founded in 1852 by Charles R. Steele and his father-in-law Ransom Steele, the private banking firm of C. R. and R. Steele, Bankers, was the first bank between Kenosha and Chicago. That same year, two other



banks were founded in Waukegan - the Bank of Northern Illinois, and a branch of the bank of Paine Brothers & Co. The Paine Brothers bank closed not long afterwards, but sometime in the mid 1850's, the Bank of Northern Illinois merged with the Steele bank. The bank survived the Panic of 1857, but in 1861, the Bank of Northern Illinois liquidated its assets. Charles R. Steele continued in the bank business under the name of C. R. & R. Steele, Bankers, erecting a new bank building on part of the site at 1 S. Genesee.

The National Banking Act of 1864 established and regulated banking, offering the first steps towards protecting both bankers and depositors. The Steeles were among the early applicants for a national bank charter. On April 17, 1865, the bank began operating as the First National Bank of Waukegan. Charles Steele continued as President of the bank until his death in 1888.

After Charles' Steele's death, his son Nelson A. Steele became president of the bank, until his own death in 1914. At that time, Chauncey Jones was

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First National Bank of Waukegan

Built 1925, Landmarked June 18, 2007

(Continued from page 23)

elected president of the bank. That was the only time a Steele was not president of the bank. After Jones retired in 1925, Nelson Steele's son, Charles N. Steele, became president of the bank.

The other notable event of 1925 for the bank was completion of the new bank building at 1 S. Genesee. The grand opening was held March 7, 1925. Regrettably, there seems to be no record surrounding the construction other than the invitation to the Grand Opening.

It is a two-story Classical Revival Style (Neoclassical) stone-clad building designed by the Hoggson Brothers. The two-story fluted pilasters are capped with egg-and-dart capitals, in a Chicago Style influenced massing. The cornice above features a dentil molding and watertable, with a bas-relief eagle at the corner. The sign "FIRST NATIONAL BANK ESTABLISHED 1865" is carved into the cornice. The interior featured marble floors, brass chandeliers, and a large skylight. The vault was of steel-reinforced concrete, wired with electric burglar alarms.

During his administration, Charles N. Steele opened a free parking lot north of the Waukegan Hotel for the bank's customers. He also celebrated the bank's 100 year anniversary in 1962, with an estimated 4,000 people at an open house. The bank opened its first after hours walk-up window in 1962 and its first drive-up windows in 1963.

Charles Steele was succeeded by his son, Charles Nelson Steele Jr., in 1967. In 1979, after a year of rumors, the Steele family sold a majority interest in the bank to Irwin A. Goodman, Raymond A. Eiden and Harry J. Bystricky. Shortly afterwards, the new owners began renovating the bank.

The first phase of renovations was the interior. The skylight had been covered up, and uncovering the skylight was the major discovery during the project. The skylight was restored. The original desks were replaced with new period furniture. The Steele family kept some of the desks, while others were donated to historical societies.

In 1988, the owners worked on the façade, replacing the original double-hung windows and spandrel panels with new energy-efficient storefront win-

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First National Bank of Waukegan

Built 1925, Landmarked June 18, 2007

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dows in the same openings. While not historically accurate, they keep a similar rhythm to the originals and are not obtrusive. The other façade change over the years has been the two different clocks that have hung over the front door.

According to an advertisement in The News-Sun on April 8th & 9th, 1989, *"In view of our continuing growth and expansion throughout Lake County and northern Illinois, we thought it appropriate to return to the origin of our roots. As a result, our bank will once again be known throughout the state as Bank of Northern Illinois, N.A."*

Irwin Goodman passed away in 1999. Raymond Eiden and the other owners sold the Bank to State Financial in Wisconsin, finalizing the deal in 2000. In April, 2005, Associated Banc-Corp announced plans to acquire State Financial Bank. After the acquisition, 1 S. Genesee became known as Associated Banc-Corp, continuing a tradition of banking. And while the bank has changed ownership over the years, it is significant that it has always functioned as a bank building, enhancing its landmark status.

The Genesee Theatre

Built 1927, Landmarked April 20, 2009

The vision of three Waukegan men, A.L. Brumund, H.C. Burnett and D.T. Webb, the Genesee Theatre was an impressive venue for its times. Using land purchased from the YMCA for \$130,000 and enlisting the help of Chicago architect Edward Steinberg and Waukegan contractor Alva Weeks, the Genesee Theatre was constructed for around \$1 million. Not just a movie house capable of features, music and live entertainment, but also consisting of forty apartments and retail space; the Genesee Theatre facility served as a community center for the people and a justifiable beacon for the thriving city of Waukegan.

Truly incredible, the 1,799 seat Genesee was adorned with 1,200 yards of

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The Genesee Theatre

Built 1927, Landmarked April 20, 2009

(Continued from page 25)

lush tapestries, seven tons of marble and a massive Barton Grande pipe organ. In addition, no expense was spared on the modern fireproof construction, and \$100,000 heating and cooling system. Originally scheduled to



open Thanksgiving, the Genesee Theatre premiered to the public on December 25, 1927 to rave reviews.

The Genesee Theatre, located at 203 N. Genesee Street, ran a regular schedule with new features every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday, only slowing operation once due to a coal shortage in 1946. The theatre boasted the first talking picture in Waukegan with the "Lion and the Mouse" in October 1928, in addition to facilitating two world premieres: Jack Benny's 1939 "Man About Town" and "The Navy Way" in 1944. The Genesee also provided numerous other activities for the community including cooking schools, fashion shows and weddings. October 1982 saw the last first-run picture at the Theatre, and the Genesee Theatre finally closed its doors for good in 1989.

After sitting vacant for twelve years, the Genesee Theatre began its \$23 million renovation in July of 2001 as part of the City of Waukegan's downtown renovation project. With the help of over 120 volunteers, the Genesee Theatre was brought back to its original splendor. Every care was taken in the restoration to ensure the integrity of this great venue. All wall fabrics in the facility are exact replicas of the original wallpaper and coloring in the facility has been recreated as exactly as possible based on existing paint chip-pings. Many of the original plaster moldings, wooden railings and light fixtures have been kept intact. The marquee, installed on September 2, 2004, is an exact replica of the one which graced the Genesee Theatre in 1927.

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The Genesee Theatre

Built 1927, Landmarked April 20, 2009

(Continued from page 26)

Now a 115,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility, the Genesee Theatre has expansive lobbies and lounges. The stage size has been doubled and a balcony expansion has raised seating capacity to over 2,400, making the Genesee Theatre one of the largest facilities of its kind in the region. In addition, to ensure



that there is no question to the splendor of this facility, a one-of-a-kind, 18-foot, Baccarat crystal chandelier has been added to the grand lobby. The chandelier, which originally hung in Seattle's Orpheum theatre, is valued at \$350,000 and weighs 2,200 pounds. The chandelier includes thousands of pieces of crystal and features gold-plated sconces. Kept in boxes since 1967, the chandelier was sold for only \$100,000 to the Genesee Theatre by Mr. Louis Bianchi, and the remaining \$250,000 was donated to the renovation efforts.

The Genesee Theatre re-opened its doors on December 3, 2004 to two sold-out performances of Bill Cosby, and will continue to provide the highest quality of performances including comedians, Broadway productions and national and regional musical acts.

Waukegan Masonic Temple

Built 1920, Landmarked April 20, 2009

On March 7, 1919, the Board of Directors of the Waukegan Masonic Temple Association voted to purchase the "Dickinson property" from William I. and Charles R. Lyon who operated C.R. Lyon & Sons, located on Genesee Street. Samuel Schwartz purchased the old Temple on February 2, 1920 for \$21,500 and allowed the Masonic bodies to remain until the new Temple was completed. Mancel Talcott was Secretary of a building committee with

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Waukegan Masonic Temple

Built 1920, Landmarked April 20, 2009

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Thomas Arthur Simpson as Chairman, to raise funds and oversee the construction. Other committee members were Charles L. Whyte, Treasurer; William S. Watrous; Jay L. Brewster; Alva L. Rogers; Ray Whitney; Dr. Charles E. Daniels; Clarence S. Alshuler; Arthur E. Stripe and John S. Banta. E.E. Roberts of Chicago was selected as the architect and Hanson



Brothers, also of Chicago, was the contractor for the new Temple for \$136,000. The cornerstone was laid April 24, 1920.

The elaborate, four story Masonic Temple, located at 220 N. Sheridan Road, was completed and occupied in 1921. It had a large entry hall and separate lounge area on the first floor along with a ballroom equipped with a complete stage. The second floor had a small Lodge room and lounge and the third floor a beautiful large Lodge room boasting a huge pipe organ, donated by the Eastern Star. The fourth floor was locker rooms and storage. There were numerous offices and store rooms throughout. The basement had a large kitchen and dining room. Old newspaper articles show that this building was one of the centers of social activity in Waukegan at the time. A fundraising Ball was held there on Halloween night in 1924 for the new Victory Memorial Hospital, now known as Vista East Hospital. The Temple served well until Masonic activity began to decline after 1960. The Temple was sold in March of 1982 and has remained vacant ever since.

YMCA Building

Built 1924-25, Landmarked October 19, 2009

The Waukegan YMCA Building has been a significant contributor to the daily life and history of the City of Waukegan, part of the local architectural tradition, as well as a representative example of the YMCA buildings built in the 1920's.

The building, at 204 N. County Street, was not the original home of the Young Men's Christian Association in Waukegan, but it was the first building built expressly to house the YMCA. Before that, the organization met at the Hope Building at Clayton and Genesee, starting around 1911, and also much earlier in the Blumberg building over the Grand poolroom on Washington Street in 1892 during a shortlived start to the Waukegan YMCA.

The major source of funding for the new building came from \$100,000 from the Army-Navy Committee of the International YMCA, due to its work with servicemen.

This was part of a large wave of funds for new YMCA buildings across the nation. The property at County and Clayton Streets was bought in 1923, and the building was completed in 1924-



25. The building was designed by Shattuck and Layer Architects of Chicago. The plan was based on a standard program for YMCA's at the time, providing housing for single males, and a facility for adult education, sports and recreation for the community. These worked to further the major aims of the YMCA, "The improvement of the spiritual, mental, social and physical condition of young men." Hotel-like rooms with bathrooms down the hall, called dormitories or residences, were designed into every new YMCA building, and would continue to be until the late 1950s.

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YMCA Building

Built 1924-25, Landmarked October 19, 2009

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The façade of the building was representative of the time period in which it was built, using traditional elements in a relatively vernacular interpretation. Significant features include the heavily detailed brick veneer façade, including quoins, corbelled banding, and false arched windows. The main entrances to the building have pedimented porch roofs. There have not been any major alterations on the exterior, though some of the first floor doors and windows have been replaced with non-matching units. The upper 6 over 1 windows are still original. The original lettering also endures, proclaiming it to be the Young Men's Christian Association.

From the 1920's through the 1980's, activities at the YMCA building were a significant source of community for the City of Waukegan. The popularity of different activities changed over the years. For instance, during the 1920's, popular activities included Americanization classes, bicycle racing, tennis, and the learn-to-swim program. After both World Wars, ex-GI's filled the dormitories as they tried to re-start their lives in a new town. Swimming lessons continued to be popular for all ages.

The YMCA continued to be a core part of the community, with programs changing with the times. However, over the next 50 years, the clientele at the dormitories also changed, from primarily ex-GI's to down-and-out males who drew increasing complaints from the downtown neighborhood and parents of young children who wished to participate in YMCA programs. Furthermore, the City of Waukegan cited the YMCA for multiple electrical and fire code violations which would have taken hundreds of thousands of dollars to repair. The YMCA board made the difficult decision to close the residence portion of the facility in 1979. The other programs were kept open until 1987, when a new YMCA building was built at 2000 N. Western Avenue in Waukegan. The building had become too expensive to maintain, especially considering that a large portion was not being used.

The YMCA building was bought by a development company, Atrium Developers, Inc., of Waukegan. Plans were publicized to make it into office space and upper-story condominiums, but these plans have yet to materialize. The building currently houses a few business ventures, but remains predominantly vacant.

Christ Episcopal Church and Parish House

Built 1888, Landmarked October 19, 2009

The first Episcopal service in Little Fort (now City of Waukegan), Illinois occurred in February 1845 when Fr. Isaac Hallom, Rector of St. James Church, Chicago traveled to Little Fort where he read vespers, preached and baptized an infant child of Irish immigrants. The formal organization of Christ Church began on February 7, 1846. Various locations served the church's needs until the construction of a permanent building at Grand Avenue and Martin L. King, Jr. Avenue in 1850. At the time, this was the north side of Waukegan. On March 31, 1849, the residents had changed the name of Little Fort to Waukegan. Bishop Philander Chase consecrated the first church building on May 13, 1851.



The present church, at 410 Grand Avenue, built in 1888, is Richardsonian Romanesque architecture with Gothic features - pointed arches over the doorways, large front window and openings in the bell tower. The bell tower rises 120 feet and houses one eighteen-hundred pound bell cast in Troy, New York. Beautiful stained glass memorial windows adorn each side of the church. The large front window, known as the baptismal window, depicts Christ and the children. The pews are oak with cherry trim. The church's exterior is Carbondale brownstone. Bishop William G. McLaren consecrated the structure on January 31, 1889.

The Parish House, constructed in 1903 to meet the growing needs of Christ Church and the Waukegan community, serves as the administration building and fellowship hall. Christ Episcopal also has a beautiful chapel attached to the main church, The Chapel of Our Lady, which has been described as a Gothic gem. The chapel was completed in 1914 and was dedicated by the Right Reverend Charles Palmerstone Anderson, D.D., Bishop of Chicago, on Sunday, December 11, 1915. The 28-foot by 63-foot chapel seats 60 and

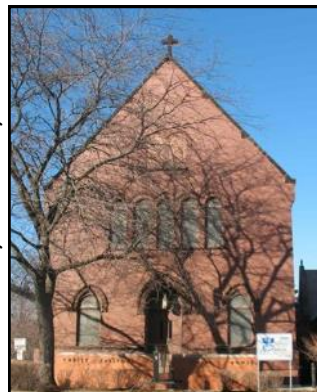
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Christ Episcopal Church and Parish House

Built 1888, Landmarked October 19, 2009

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was designed by architect Harry Mace of Evanston. The golden oak altar was carved by John Lang, son of the famed wood carver of Oberammergau, Germany, Alois Lang. The stained glass triptych window behind the altar was imported from England. The chapel is considered to be one of the best examples of perpendicular Gothic design in the northern Chicago metropolitan area.



Parish House

The Biddlecom Residence

Built 1872, Landmarked March 21, 2011

The Biddlecom Residence is an excellent example of the Italianate style which dominated American house construction at that time and was popular in Waukegan from about 1870 to 1890. The Biddlecom House epitomizes the Italianate style with its low-pitched, heavily-bracketed roof, square tower, and arched windows.

The house was built by Brown and Benjamin Porter in 1872. Based on a diary kept by David Simpson, an employee of the Porter Brothers, they also built 628 N. Genesee (constructed between 1867 and 1885), 408 N. Sheridan (1875), and 710 N. Sheridan (1872). The style is also found in houses at 946 N. Sheridan (1876) and 509 N. Genesee (1872).

The Porter Brothers built 614 N. Genesee for Harriet Biddlecom, the widow of James Biddlecom, an early settler in Lake County, Illinois. James Biddlecom served as Lake County Clerk and helped found the First National Bank of Waukegan. Harriet Biddlecom died in 1874 and title of the property passed to her son, Milton P. Biddlecom and his wife Clara.

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The Biddlecom Residence

Built 1872, Landmarked March 21, 2011

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Title of the property eventually passed to another son, Jerome C. Biddlecom, who had operated the “Genuine Hat Store” in Chicago with his brother, Milton, from 1872 until he returned to Waukegan in 1876 to marry Almeda B. Shaul, a daughter of Johnson and Julia J. Shaul of Waukegan. The next year he opened a clothing store in Waukegan with Thomas H. Lindsey. The store, called Lindsey and Biddlecom, was located on the west side of Genesee Street, 11 doors south of Madison Avenue (now the site of a parking lot). Jerome and Almeda Biddlecom had a son, Willard, born in 1878 and a daughter, Belle, born in 1883.

The Jerome Biddlecoms lived at 614 N. Genesee until 1922 when they sold it to John S. and Mary T. Whyte. This is approximately the time that Waukegan streets were renumbered and the house—which previously had the address of 713 N. Genesee—became 614 N. Genesee.



The Whytes sold the property to George S. and Lucile McGaughey in 1936. McGaughey, a lawyer born in Madison County, Illinois, in 1899, joined the legal firm of Runyard and Behama in Waukegan in 1928, the year he married Lucile Belton of Champaign. They had three children: Eugene, Betty, and Joyce. In 1931 George McGaughey became the First Assistant State's Attorney and by 1935 he opened a private practice at 226 W. Washington Street and was appointed Corporation Counsel for the City of Waukegan. The McGaughey family lived in the house until 1977. The current owner, Harry Came, purchased the property in 1994 from the McGaugheys. Harry Came said that one of the saddest elements of his house was the truncated roof on top the central tower. It just didn't look right. You could tell some-

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The Biddlecom Residence

Built 1872, Landmarked March 21, 2011

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thing was missing. Harry vowed that one day he would make the roof whole again.

After doing some research and finding a photo from the 1930's showing the original Second Empire concave mansard tower with roundel windows, Harry hired an architect and master carpenter. The project began to take shape with drawings for this mansard tower. The carpenter built the tower on the ground. It would then be air-lifted in place upon completion. Round cedar shingles were installed on the sides with copper for the little gabled roofs on the bottom of each side, as well as for the hip roof and the finial on top of the tower.



The Karcher Hotel

Built 1927, Landmarked September 3, 2013

The Karcher Hotel, a.k.a. The Karcher Artspace Lofts, is a highly significant structure in the commercial and social history of Waukegan. It was built during a time of tremendous growth in Waukegan's history and played a major role in the city until the mid 1980's. The redevelopment of this building into the Karcher Artspace Lofts in 2012 has helped nurture an emerging arts community while bringing renewed vitality to downtown Waukegan. Its redevelopment has turned an eyesore of the downtown into a destination point for visitors and Waukegan residents alike.



Construction on the Karcher Hotel began in early 1927 on the corner of

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The Karcher Hotel

Built 1927, Landmarked September 3, 2013

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Washington and Utica (now Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue) Streets and finished on October 6, 1927. The building was planned, developed and financed by George W. Benfer of Freeport, IL and built by architect BK Gibson of Chicago. The Karcher Hotel opened on June 28, 1928 and contained nine stories with 150 rooms and 120 bathrooms. There were two large dining rooms and a 20 x 50 feet lobby with bronze and gold leaf décor and bronze lighting fixtures throughout. A fireplace, large staircase, and mezzanine completed the design of the interior lobby. A postcard advertised a beacon on the roof of the building for visitors to follow.

The exterior of the Karcher Hotel is a modified Italian Classical Revival design in light gray terra cotta, red and dark brick, and gray terra cotta. The first two stories are faced with light gray terra cotta; the third through the eighth stories are faced with red brick. The upper section was once topped with a terra cotta cornice, but the imminent danger of the cornice crumbling and falling onto the sidewalks below led to its removal, preservation and safe storage in 2012 during the Karcher Hotel's most recent renovation. There is an elaborate classical frieze around the outside of the top and lower section of the building as well as leaf, egg, and dart patterns.

The Karcher Hotel's unique location marks the western gateway into Waukegan's downtown along Washington Street. Its nine-story height towered over other buildings in the immediate area with only the Waukegan Hotel, Waukegan Building, and the Lake County Building higher.

In 1965, the Karcher Hotel was bought and renovated by James Collins and Nick Penn and the name was changed to the Collins-Karcher Hotel. In 1980, it was bought by Pilgrim Housing Partners of Oak Park, IL for a retirement home and reopened on May 26, 1982 as the Hotel for Active Seniors. Pilgrim Housing spent \$1 million dollars on renovating and restoring the building, including restoring the terra cotta, the plaster lobby ceiling, terrazzo flooring, elevators, railings, and heating system. They also added a red awning and replaced the windows.

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The Karcher Hotel

Built 1927, Landmarked September 3, 2013

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On Christmas morning in 1984, a fire broke out in the interior wood and plaster wall of the Hotel and burned into a clothing store on the main floor. Eight people died from carbon monoxide poisoning, seven were injured, and four were hospitalized. This was the second fire in the Hotel's history; the first was in 1978 but did little damage. The fire of 1984 is known as the worst fire in Waukegan's history.

In February of 1988, the owner began rehabilitating the building and received a court order to finish the work by March and remove all boarding from the windows and replace the windows and exterior canopies as well as clean up the smoke damage. This was never finished. In March of 1990, the Karcher was purchased by Al Mini who planned to turn it into a Landmark Center and complete a \$750,000 renovation. Mini renovated three floors until the water pipes burst and flooded the building. In 1996, an engineering survey showed damage in the form of a 10 feet wide and 4 inch high bulge in the brick veneer.



Since 1984, the Karcher Hotel sat empty and damaged. It was usable downtown space and throughout the last 27 years, ideas included turning it into a retirement home again. The city even filed suit to demolish the building in 1987. But despite the myriad of changes, the Karcher Hotel still stands today. In October 2011, Artspace Lofts, LP of Minneapolis purchased the building to convert the hotel into 36 units of "live/work" space for artists and their families. Retail space is available on the ground floor for complementary small businesses. The conversion of the Karcher Hotel into the Karcher Artspace Lofts has brought a renewed energy to the area by transforming one of the downtown's oldest and tallest buildings into a lively and active residential community. The Karcher Hotel was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on August 9, 2002.

The Isaac R. Lyon Residence

Built circa 1873, Landmarked December 1, 2014

The Isaac R. Lyon home at 946 N. Sheridan Road is a highly significant structure that is a contributing landmark in Waukegan's Near North Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places (listed May 3, 1978). The iconic home portrays the heritage and cultural characteristics of early Waukegan, identifies with a person who significantly contributed to the development of the community, and is representative of the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style.



The home was constructed circa 1873 by architect/contractor George Brean for Isaac R. Lyon (1815-1893). It is a fine example of the Italianate style of architecture that was prominent following the Civil War (1861-1865). Lyon, an early pioneer to Little Fort (now Waukegan) established a general merchandise business in 1843. This business proved successful and Lyon rose to a prominent stature gaining the nickname of Waukegan's "merchant prince."

The origins of Waukegan's name can be traced to Isaac R. Lyon as he was part of the three member committee that was formed to consider names to

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The Isaac R. Lyon Residence

Built circa 1873, Landmarked December 1, 2014

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replace the town's original title of Little Fort. This committee recommended the name Waukegan and residents formally approved the choice by ballot on March 31, 1849.

The home itself has an interesting history. It was originally located on the northwest corner of Sheridan Road and Grand Avenue. The home was moved in the mid-1880s to its current location by George R. Lyon (1846-1913) after the passing of his father Isaac.

Much of the original Italianate exterior features of the home remain including: balanced, symmetrical rectangular shape; tall appearance; wide overhanging eaves with brackets; side bay windows; tall, narrow windows with hood moldings; arches above windows and doors. The tower or cupola has been lost.

The home was purchased by the current owners in 2012.

The Elijah P. Ferry Residence

Built 1846, Landmarked June 1, 2015

Located at 308 Julian Street, the Elijah P. Ferry residence was built during a time of tremendous growth in Waukegan's history. Ferry, an early pioneer to Little Fort (now Waukegan) was an important figure in the early development of the city. He was elected Waukegan's first mayor in 1859. While



mayor, Ferry hosted Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) at his home following a speech that Lincoln made for the people of Waukegan on April 2, 1860. During the Civil War, Ferry was appointed to the position of assistant Adjutant-

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The Elijah P. Ferry Residence

Built 1846, Landmarked June 1, 2015

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General and Colonel on the staff of Illinois Governor, Richard Yates (1815-1873).

Elijah P. Ferry also played an important role in the development of the United States. Following the Civil War, as the country was expanding west, Ferry was appointed Surveyor General of the Washington Territory. In 1889, Ferry was elected as the first Governor of the State of Washington.

The Elijah P. Ferry Residence was also used by the American Red Cross from 1955-1977 and it is a contributing landmark in Waukegan's Near North Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places (listed May 3, 1978).

The James Y. Cory Residence

Built 1852, Landmarked June 1, 2015

The City of Waukegan recognizes the James Y. Cory Residence's identification with a person who significantly contributed to the development of the City of Waukegan. Located at 321 N. Martin L. King, Jr. Avenue (formerly Utica Street), it was built during a time of tremendous growth in Waukegan's history. Cory, an early settler and entrepreneur of Little Fort (Waukegan), Illinois, played a significant role in the development of the community. Cory was part of many ventures including helping to organize the Waukegan Gas Light and Coke Company, organizing Waukegan Fairs, and was also owner and editor of the Waukegan Gazette



Waukegan's history. Cory, an early settler and entrepreneur of Little Fort (Waukegan), Illinois, played a significant role in the development of the community. Cory was part of many ventures including helping to organize the Waukegan Gas Light and Coke Company, organizing Waukegan Fairs, and was also owner and editor of the Waukegan Gazette

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The James Y. Cory Residence

Built 1852, Landmarked June 1, 2015

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newspaper from 1858 to 1871. James Y. Cory was appointed postmaster of Waukegan in 1861 by President Abraham Lincoln and reappointed to the post in 1869 by President Ulysses S. Grant.

James Y. Cory was a known abolitionist and it is believed that the home was active in the Underground Railroad and was used to assist and hide runaway slaves. Although, nearly impossible to prove, the Underground Railroad stories connected to Cory and the home have been passed down through the generations.

The home was also the birthplace of James' daughter Kate Cory (1861-1958). Kate Cory was an artist and photographer who gained repute for her work with the Hopi Indian tribe in the Southwest United States. Kate Cory is considered one of the West's most famous artists.

The David Ballentine Residence

Built 1846, Landmarked June 1, 2015

The David Ballentine Residence, located at 837 N. Sheridan Road, is identified with a person who significantly contributed to the development of the City of Waukegan. Ballentine, an early pioneer to Little Fort (Waukegan), Illinois, helped bring rail service to the city as a charter commissioner for the Illinois Parallel Rail-



road Company. Ballentine served two terms as President of the Village Board of Little Fort and was elected as the second mayor of the city, ultimately serving three terms from 1860-1862.

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The David Ballentine Residence

Built 1846, Landmarked June 1, 2015

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When news of the Civil War made its way to Waukegan, Mayor Ballentine organized public meetings at the Lake County Courthouse to rally citizens to volunteer for service in the Illinois State militia and to support the Union cause. Company H, Waukegan Zouaves was formed from these meetings with local men volunteering for service. Money was also raised to help fund this company by Mayor Ballentine.

The City of Waukegan finds the David Ballentine Residence representative of the distinguishing characteristics of architecture inherently valuable for the study of a period, type, method of construction or use of indigenous materials. The David Ballentine Residence is an excellent example of the Italianate style which dominated American construction at that time and was prominent following the Civil War (1861-1865). The David Ballentine Residence epitomizes the Italianate architectural style with wide cornices with brackets supporting the roof and molded window caps remain from the original exterior. The residence was constructed with Milwaukee Cream Brick, also known as Cream City Brick. This distinctive cream or light yellow colored brick was made from clay found around Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in the Menomonee River Valley and the western banks of Lake Michigan.

The Asiel Z. Blodgett Residence

Built circa 1870's, Landmarked June 1, 2015

The Asiel Z. Blodgett Residence, located at 616 N. Sheridan Road, identifies with a person who significantly contributed to the development of the City of Waukegan. Blodgett (1832-1916), was a prominent man in early Waukegan, Illinois. Early in his career he worked as a brakeman on the construction train for the Chicago & Milwaukee Railway which later consolidated into the Chicago & Northwestern Railway. Blodgett moved up the ranks to conductor and in 1858 was made station agent in Waukegan.

During the Civil War, Blodgett used his influence to help raise a company of men to volunteer to fight for the Union cause. Blodgett volunteered to serve in the Union Army and was promoted to Company D of the 96th Illinois

(Continued on page 42)

The Asiel Z. Blodgett Residence

Built circa 1870's, Landmarked June 1, 2015

(Continued from page 41)

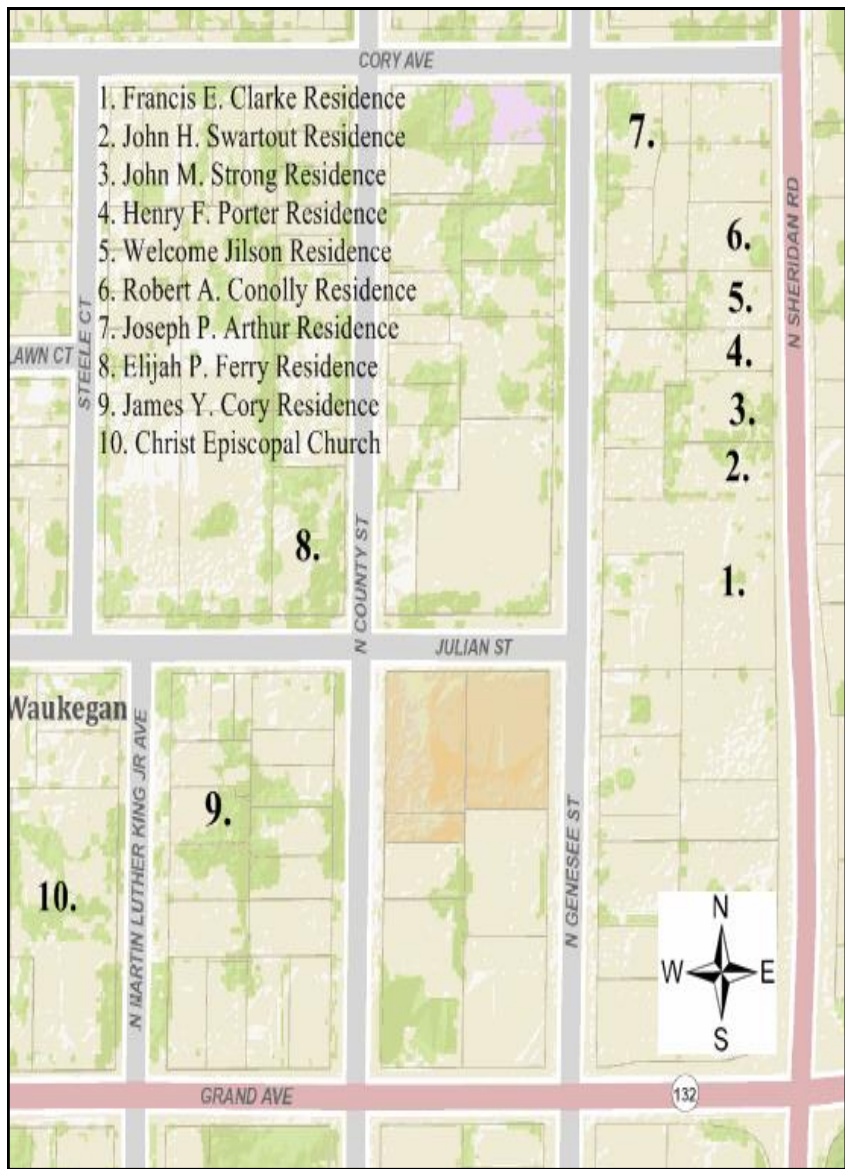
Volunteer Infantry. Captain Blodgett took part in the Battles of Chickamauga, Lookout Mountain, and Missionary Ridge as well as all of the engagements of the Atlanta Campaign.

Blodgett returned to Waukegan following the war and started operating a stock farm for breeding and importing heavy draft horses. He has the distinction of being the first importer of Clydesdale horses in the state of Illinois, starting this career in 1872.

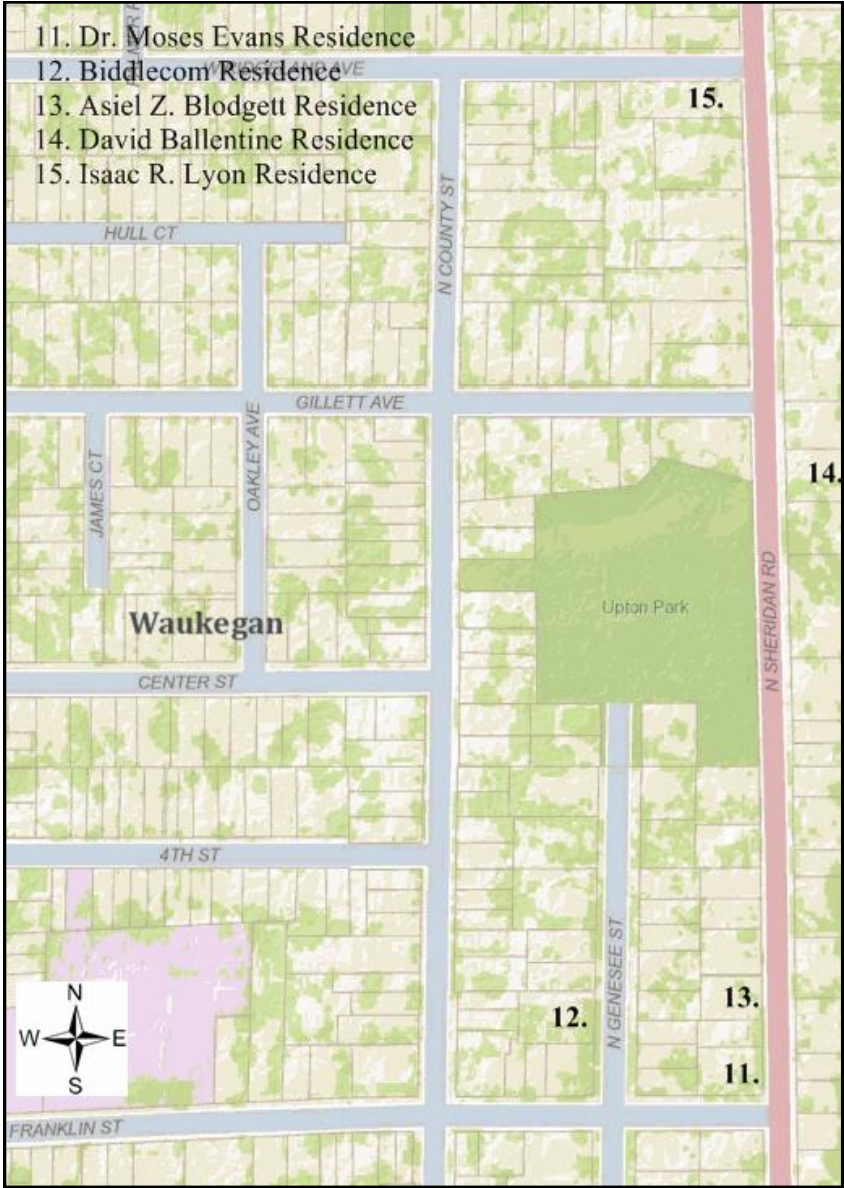
Asiel Z. Blodgett went on to serve two terms as Mayor of Waukegan (1883-1884), two years on the Board of County Supervisors, and four years on the Waukegan City Council.



Maps of Waukegan Landmarks



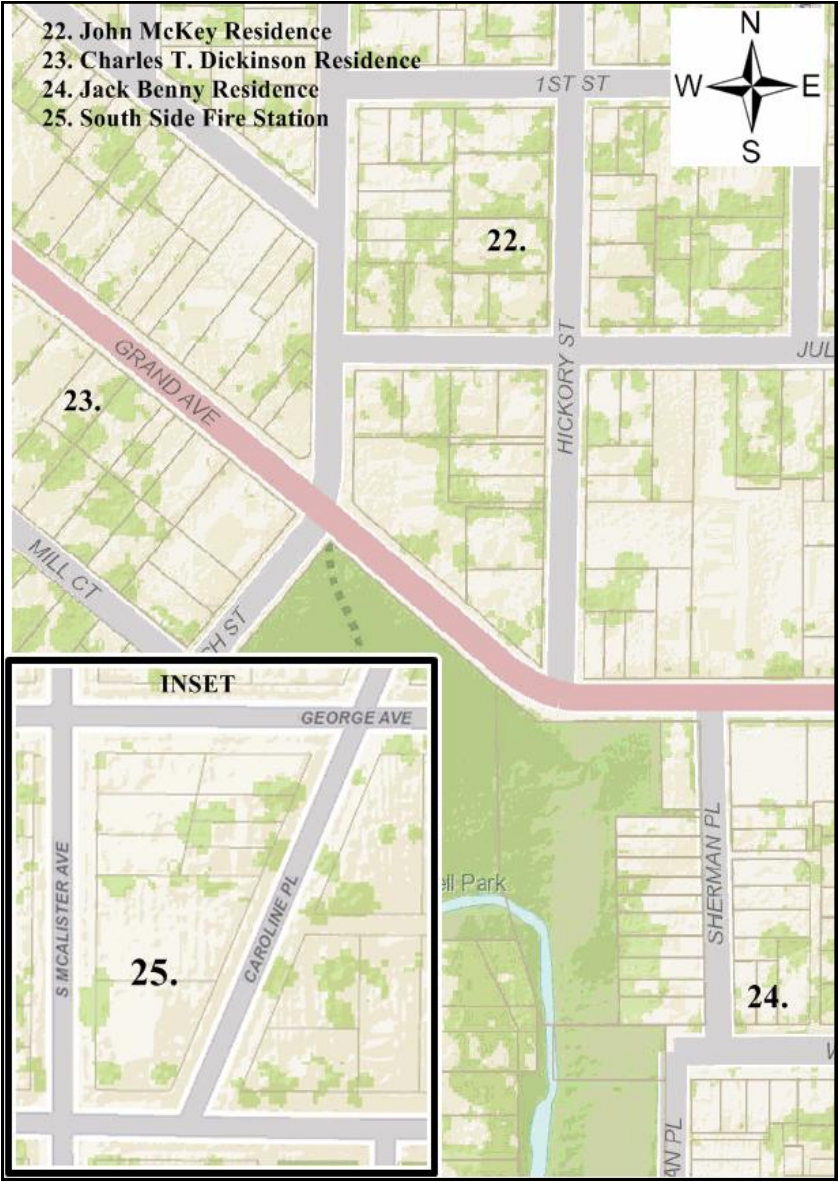
Maps of Waukegan Landmarks



Maps of Waukegan Landmarks



Maps of Waukegan Landmarks



NOTES



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